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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Fifth Committee (A/57/771)*]

57/305. Human resources management

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolutions 49/222 A and B of 23 December 1994 and 20 July 1995, 51/226 of 3 April 1997, 52/219 of 22 December 1997, 52/252 of 8 September 1998, 53/221 of 7 April 1999 and 55/258 of 14 June 2001 and its decision 56/462 of 24 December 2001, as well as its other relevant resolutions and decisions, subject to the provisions of the present resolution,

Having considered the relevant reports on human resources management questions submitted to the General Assembly for its consideration[1] and the related reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,[2]

I

Principles and role of the Office of Human Resources Management of the Secretariat

1. *Reaffirms* the principles set out in section I of resolutions 53/221 and 55/258 concerning human resources management and the role of the Office of Human Resources Management of the Secretariat;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that United Nations staff members adhere fully to the United Nations code of conduct as approved by resolution 52/252, in conformity with staff regulation 1.2 of the Staff Regulations of the United Nations and the principle set out in section I, paragraph 6, of resolution 53/221 concerning the integrity and independence of the international civil service;

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[1] A/55/451, A/56/227, A/56/512 and Corr.1, A/56/701, A/56/816 and A/56/834; *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 16* (A/57/16) and ibid., *Supplement No. 30* (A/57/30); A/57/126, A/57/276, A/57/293, A/57/310, A/57/413, A/57/414, A/57/726; A/C.5/56/3, A/C.5/56/L.7 and A/C.5/57/L.3.

[2] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 7* (A/56/7), paras. 130–135; A/56/846 and A/57/469.

II

Human resources management reform

1. *Appreciates* the efforts of the Secretary-General aimed at reforming human resources management in the Organization, and in this regard reaffirms the importance of the central role of the Office of Human Resources Management in achieving this objective;

2. *Welcomes* the efforts of the Secretary-General to improve conditions of service within the framework of the common system, and affirms that his endeavours to improve performance, productivity and results across the Organization are a necessary complement to improved conditions of service;

3. *Endorses* the opinions of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions contained in paragraph 17 of its report;[3]

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session in a comprehensive manner on the achievements of the human resources management reform, when sufficient information will be available on the experiences of the Secretariat with the implementation of the reform initiatives as implemented within the prerogative of the Secretary-General or as approved by the Assembly;

5. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to conduct a study, through the Office of Internal Oversight Services of the Secretariat, on the impact of human resources management reform, in particular on the improvement of recruitment, placement, promotion and training, including an assessment of the role of the central review bodies and mobility, within the Secretariat, taking into account, inter alia, the relevant reports of the Joint Inspection Unit, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session;

6. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that all future reports on the implementation of the human resources management reform focus on the results of such measures;

Recruitment and placement

7. *Reaffirms* the provisions contained in section IV of resolution 55/258, on recruitment, placement and promotion, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure the full implementation thereof;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity serve as the paramount consideration in the employment of staff, with due regard to the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in accordance with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations;

9. *Reiterates* the value of a transparent process of recruitment, placement and promotion in the Organization;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure the accountability of programme managers in the staff selection process, in close collaboration with the Office of Human Resources Management, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session;

11. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to develop measures, as necessary, in cooperation with the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the Joint Inspection Unit, to

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[3] A/57/469.

prevent discrimination on the basis of nationality, race, gender, religion or language in the United Nations, in accordance with the principles of the Charter and the provisions of the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session;

12. *Reiterates its concern* about the continuing high vacancy rates at some United Nations duty stations and regional commissions, especially those located in developing countries;

13. *Recalls* the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services following the inspection of the administrative and management practices of the United Nations Office at Nairobi,[4] and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to address the causes of the continuous high vacancy rates at all the heavily affected United Nations offices and regional commissions in developing countries, particularly those located in Africa, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session on the differences between the policies and procedures for staff recruitment, selection and appointment of the Secretariat and those of jointly funded organizations, such as the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, the International Civil Service Commission and the Joint Inspection Unit, specifically addressing the mechanisms in those jointly funded organizations to ensure equal access to the opportunity to compete for positions, merit-based staffing and fairness and transparency in the selection process;

15. *Welcomes* the introduction of Galaxy, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure that it will enhance transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in the recruitment process of the United Nations system, subject to the framework of current mandates of human resources management in the Organization;

16. *Notes* that nationals of one hundred and eighty-six Member States have submitted employment applications utilizing Galaxy;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General to further improve Galaxy, including measures to deal with the increased number of applications, and to invite all the organizations of the United Nations system to use Galaxy for recruitment, and to report on its performance to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session;

18. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to inform Member States monthly, through the United Nations web site, and upon request in hard copy, of appointments made;

19. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that relevant experience, knowledge and institutional memory acquired in the United Nations system are given due consideration in evaluating applications for promotion, consistent with the need to select staff on the basis of merit, demonstrated competencies and performance;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General, while filling vacant posts in the language services of the Secretariat, to ensure the highest quality of translation and interpretation in all six official languages;

21. *Recalls* resolution 55/258, in particular section IV, paragraph 3, and draws attention to the difficulties relating to access to information technology by some developing countries, including the least developed countries;

22. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in view of the difficulties referred to above, to continue to maintain a system of circulation of hard copies of all vacancy announcements,

[4] See A/56/620.

in accordance with resolution 55/258, for distribution to all delegations, except those that indicate otherwise, as well as to continue the practice of receiving and processing applications in hard copy;

23. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to provide information about Galaxy in all six official languages on the official United Nations web site;

24. *Reaffirms* the need to respect the equality of each of the two working languages of the Secretariat, reaffirms also the use of additional working languages in specific duty stations as mandated, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to ensure that vacancy announcements specify the need for either of the working languages of the Secretariat, unless the functions of the post require a specific working language;

25. *Affirms* the need for vacant posts to be filled expeditiously, subject to operational requirements, and requests the Secretary-General to make efforts to complete the recruitment process without delay;

26. *Welcomes* the progress made in reducing the number of Member States that are unrepresented in the Secretariat;

27. *Expresses concern*, however, at the number of Member States that continue to be unrepresented and underrepresented in the Secretariat and the increase in the number of overrepresented Member States;

28. *Reaffirms* section IV, paragraph 8, of resolution 55/258, including the requirement for indicative means to measure progress in improving equitable geographical representation;

29. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide information on these issues, including on section IV, paragraph 8, of resolution 55/258, in a separate, self-contained report for consideration by the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session;

30. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to include an analysis of the level of underrepresentation in future reports on the composition of the Secretariat;

31. *Recognizes* that Galaxy should have a positive impact on improving equitable geographical distribution among Member States in the process of recruiting United Nations staff;

32. *Reiterates its request* to the Secretary-General, contained in section X, paragraph 3, of resolution 55/258, to further increase his efforts to improve the composition of the Secretariat by ensuring a wide and equitable geographical distribution of staff in all departments;

33. *Requests* the Secretary-General to hold the heads of relevant departments accountable for the human resources action plans and to ensure that they in turn take due account of equitable geographical representation when considering candidates on the lists endorsed by the central review bodies, as well as on the rosters, and to report to the General Assembly annually on progress made by departments in the implementation of their respective human resources action plans;

34. *Reaffirms* the established policies by which temporary staff are used to replace staff on extended sick leave or maternity leave or to cover essential work which, as a result of vacancies, cannot be performed by regular staff;

35. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report on the function, relevant operational factors and incidence of temporary staff appointed at the Professional level or above for less than one year under the 100 series of the Staff Rules of the United Nations, and the implications for substantive appointments to the Secretariat;

36. *Invites* the Secretary-General to consider including the question of equitable geographical representation in the secretariats of the United Nations system in the agenda of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session;

37. *Reaffirms* that, in accordance with resolutions 41/206 A of 11 December 1986, 53/221 and 55/258, no post should be considered the exclusive preserve of any Member State or group of States, including at the highest levels, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure that, as a general rule, no national of a Member State succeeds a national of that State in a senior post and that there is no monopoly on senior posts by nationals of any State or group of States, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session;

38. *Reiterates its request* to the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures to ensure, at the senior and policy-making levels of the Secretariat, equitable representation of Member States, especially those with inadequate representation at those levels, including unrepresented and underrepresented States, in particular developing countries, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, and to continue to include relevant information thereon in all future reports on the composition of the Secretariat;

39. *Reiterates its request*, contained in section XIV, paragraph 2, of resolution 55/258, which recalled resolution 53/221, including the reaffirmation of the goal of 50/50 gender distribution by 2000 in all categories of posts within the United Nations system, especially at the D-1 level and above, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with Article 101 of the Charter, and taking into account the continuing lack of representation or underrepresentation of women from certain countries, in particular from developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

40. *Reiterates* section III.C, paragraph 8, of resolution 51/226, in which it strongly encouraged Member States to support the efforts of the United Nations and the specialized agencies to increase the percentage of women in Professional posts, especially at the D-1 level and above, by identifying and regularly presenting more women candidates and by encouraging women to apply for posts in the Secretariat and the specialized agencies;

41. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in the light of ongoing concern about the underrepresentation of women in the United Nations, especially at senior levels, to undertake a comprehensive review of progress made towards the goal of 50/50 gender distribution, including, inter alia, the factors affecting progress, and to submit proposals to improve gender representation, particularly in offices in which women are underrepresented, to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session;

42. *Reiterates* that the national competitive examination programme is a useful tool for selecting the best-qualified candidates from inadequately represented Member States, and requests the Secretary-General to continue to hold the examinations for posts subject to geographical distribution at the P-2 level and, if necessary, at the P-3 level for those Member States;

43. *Also reiterates* the policy that appointments at the P-3 level shall normally be made through competitive examination;

44. *Notes* that the time needed to complete a national competitive examination cycle from the deadline for the applications until the successful candidate is placed on the roster is one year or more, and requests the Secretary-General to significantly reduce the time needed, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session;

45. *Recalls* paragraph 39 of resolution 57/300 of 20 December 2002, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure that movement from the General Service to the Professional category is consistent with legislative mandates;

46. *Notes with concern* the low proportion of staff below the age of 35, and requests the Secretary-General to examine the factors that inhibit the selection of young people and to report accordingly to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session;

Mobility

47. *Welcomes* the efforts of the Secretary-General to develop a more versatile, multi-skilled, mobile and experienced international civil service;

48. *Recalls* section V of resolution 55/258;

49. *Stresses* in this regard that when implementing mobility policies, the Secretary-General should ensure that:

a) Mobility does not negatively affect the continuity and the quality of services and the institutional memory and capacity of the Organization;

b) It does not lead to the transfer or abolition of posts as a result of vacancies;

c) It has a positive impact in filling existing high vacancy rates in some United Nations duty stations and regional commissions;

d) There is a clear differentiation between mobility within duty stations and mobility across duty stations and that the latter should be a more important factor in career development;

e) Mobility is encouraged in all categories of Professional and higher level posts;

50. *Acknowledges* that mobility needs to be supported through greater efforts to improve conditions of life and work throughout different duty stations;

51. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to expedite, as appropriate, the agreements between the Secretariat and the United Nations funds and programmes and the specialized agencies for all staff levels in relation to mobility;

52. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps to ensure that mobility will not be used as an instrument of coercion against staff;

53. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to closely monitor mobility and to submit proposals to the General Assembly, for consideration at its fifty-ninth session, in order to solve any problems resulting from increased staff mobility;

Performance management and career development

54. *Acknowledges with appreciation* the achievements to date in establishing and promulgating organizational values and core and managerial competencies, expanded learning and development programmes and a revised performance management system as steps towards developing staff careers;

55. *Notes with appreciation* the efforts of the Secretary-General to create a fair, equitable, transparent and measurable system of performance management for all staff, and encourages the Secretary-General to continue to develop a results-based culture that rewards excellent performance;

56. *Requests* the Secretary-General to implement all necessary measures to further enhance a comprehensive and systematic career development system, including in the areas of the performance appraisal system, training and competitive examinations, in order to

provide for the recognition of competence and outstanding performance and to facilitate the continuous professional growth of staff at all levels, and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session on the progress made in the implementation of those measures;

57. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to make specific proposals for making full use of the potential contribution of the United Nations System Staff College in the development of a common organizational culture and strengthening managerial skills and competencies;

Contractual arrangements

58. *Reaffirms* section III, paragraph 2, of resolution 55/258, and reiterates its request to the Secretary-General to submit definitive and concrete proposals on new contractual arrangements, specifying the differences between existing and proposed types of appointments, for consideration by the General Assembly as soon as possible, and requests the Secretary-General, in the meantime, to continue current contractual arrangements in accordance with existing mandates;

III

Delegation of authority and accountability

1. *Requests* the Secretary-General, when implementing measures in regard to the delegation of authority to programme managers, strictly to comply with the principles and policies established in section IV of resolution 53/221 and section VII of resolution 55/258;

2. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report on a biennial basis on the progress made in the implementation of the provisions contained in section IV of resolution 53/221 and section VII of resolution 55/258;

3. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to report on the application of staff rule 104.14 (*b*) in the context of the comprehensive report on the implementation of human resources management reform;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to expeditiously finalize and issue new administrative instructions on the implementation of section VII, paragraph 8, of resolution 55/258;

IV

Monitoring capacity in the Office of Human Resources Management

1. *Endorses* the approach outlined by the Secretary-General to developing a more robust monitoring capacity in the Office of Human Resources Management;

2. *Takes note* of the intention of the Advisory Committee to revert to this matter[5] in the context of its review of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004–2005;

3. *Emphasizes* the importance of the monitoring of policies, guidelines and practices by the Office of Human Resources Management, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure that the proper screening process for recruitment, identifying the best-qualified candidates, is conducted by the Office, in accordance with section IV,

[5] See A/57/469, para. 15.

paragraph 7, of resolution 55/258, to continue to develop a comprehensive monitoring system and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session;

V

Consultants and individual contractors

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;[6]

2. *Reaffirms* that consultants shall not perform functions of staff members of the Organization or have any representative or supervisory responsibility;

3. *Reiterates* that the Secretary-General should refrain from using consultants to carry out functions assigned to established posts and that consultants should be hired only in strict accordance with existing rules and relevant General Assembly resolutions and where expertise is not available within the Organization;

4. *Also reiterates* that in areas where consultants are frequently hired for a period of more than one year, the Secretary-General should submit proposals, where necessary, for the establishment of posts and should report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session;

5. *Reaffirms* the guidelines, principles and comments contained in section VIII, paragraph 11, of resolution 53/221;

6. *Takes note* of the recommendation contained in paragraph 5 of the report of the Advisory Committee;[3]

7. *Endorses* the recommendation made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its forty-second session that the Secretary-General should make greater efforts to ensure geographical balance among qualified consultants and individual contractors;[7]

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report biennially, starting at its fifty-ninth session, on the use of consultants and individual contractors within the Secretariat and the regional commissions and the factors contributing to that, with statistics for each year of the two-year period, including information on their duties;

VI

Employment of retired former staff

1. *Endorses* the conclusions and recommendations on the employment of retired former staff contained in paragraphs 10, 11, 13 and 14 of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;[3]

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to have recourse to the employment of retired former staff only if the operational requirements of the Organization cannot be met by existing staff;

3. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that the employment of retired former staff has no adverse effects on the career planning and mobility of other United Nations staff members;

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[6] A/57/310.

[7] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 16* (A/57/16), para. 45.

4. *Stresses* that the hiring of retired former staff should be on an exceptional basis, and in this regard encourages the Secretary-General to fill vacant posts at senior and decision-making levels through the established staff selection process;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session on the employment of retired former staff, including the criteria for selection of staff in the Professional categories, the number of staff hired for periods exceeding two years and the number of retired former staff serving in posts that affect the decision-making process, in particular in the areas of recruitment and promotion within the Secretariat and in the field, as well as instances in which representative responsibilities before intergovernmental bodies are assigned to retired staff;

6. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to include in the report referred to in paragraph 5 of the present section information on economy and efficiency gains envisaged in the context of language posts;

7. *Discourages* the Secretary-General from using retired former staff to present reports to any intergovernmental body;

VII

Mandatory age of separation

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Advisory Committee,[8] and decides that, in order to prioritize the rejuvenation of the Secretariat, no further changes are required to the rule of the mandatory age of separation established at 60 years;

2. *Reaffirms* that retention in service beyond the mandatory age of separation shall be pursuant to the exceptions provided for in staff regulation 9.5, and requests the Secretary-General to report on the exceptions made and their circumstances on a biennial basis;

VIII

Placement of staff members serving in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General

Approves, in view of the special circumstances, the proposal contained in the report of the Secretary-General,[9] while emphasizing that the process must be transparent and in accordance with the Staff Regulations and Rules, and requests the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of this procedure to the General Assembly as appropriate;

IX

Composition of the Secretariat

1. *Notes* the study conducted by the Secretariat as requested in section X, paragraph 4, of resolution 55/258, and decides to revert to this subject at its fifty-ninth session;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General, as approved by resolution 42/220 A of 21 December 1987, to fully reach the level of posts subject to geographical distribution, which currently stands at 2,700, and to conduct a study which includes a comprehensive assessment of the system of geographical distribution and an assessment of the issues relating to possible changes in the number of posts subject to the system of geographical

[8] A/56/846.

[9] See A/56/816.

distribution, bearing in mind Article 101 of the Charter and the efficiency and effectiveness of the Organization;

3. *Reiterates its request* to the Secretary-General, contained in section IV, paragraph 8, of resolution 55/258, to develop a programme and set specific targets as soon as possible for achieving equitable geographical representation for all unrepresented and underrepresented Member States, bearing in mind the need to increase the number of staff recruited from Member States below the mid-point of their desirable ranges;

4. *Notes with concern* the possibility of an increase in the number of unrepresented and underrepresented Member States within the Secretariat, according to the statistics provided by the Secretariat on the number of retirees for the period from 2003 to 2007;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make efforts to avoid the increase of the number of underrepresented Member States, by paying due attention to equitable geographical distribution in the recruitment and selection process, bearing in mind the large number of retirees projected;

6. *Reaffirms its request* to the Secretary-General not to decrease the proportion of entry-level posts at the P-1 to P-3 levels for budgetary purposes;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to include, for informational purposes, in the future report on the composition of the Secretariat statistics on the composition of the General Service and related staff, national staff and project personnel, including, inter alia, nationality, gender and level;

X

Staff-management consultations

Reiterates its request, contained in section XI, paragraph 4, of resolution 53/221, that the Secretary-General take into account the views of staff representatives, in accordance with article VIII of the Staff Regulations and Rules and resolution 35/213 of 17 December 1980;

XI

Amendments to Staff Rules

Takes note of the reports of the Secretary-General.[10]

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[10] A/56/227 and A/57/126.